

# INTERACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING MENTEES

A primary concern for many peer mentors is a lack of engagement from their mentees. Here are some strategies you can use to draw out, encourage, and engage your mentee.

In your opinion, what makes a session engaging? Consider both the session design, agenda, and how it's facilitated.

What makes designing and facilitating a session challenging for you?

## Facilitating a Reflection

Reflection, according to John Dewey, is “a pause after an experience, recalling what has happened in the past & looking for similarities, organizing the new experience, and understanding the significance with an end view to personal purpose and possible consequences” (1997).

### Broad, Open-Ended Questions to Guide a Reflection

- How did I feel at the beginning of the activity?  
At the end?
- If there was a shift, when did it happen?
- If there were obstacles, what do I need to clear the way?
- What other factors were contributing?
- What resources do I want to tap into in order to get my learning needs met?
- What is one idea that I want to be sure to remember from the  
activity/carry with me as I move forward?
- What else did I observe about my learning process?

### Tips & Tricks for Reflection Activities

- Focus mostly on explanations and insights and less on what happened
- Explore feelings and unexpected happenings
- Analyze and dissect experience and reconfigure with an explanation
- Think about how this new knowledge informs future choices
- Allow for uninterrupted time
- Make connections to past experiences

### How to Engage your Audience: ROPES Learning Cycle

**Review:** what they already know

- elicit responses through questions, show of hands
- express curiosity by drawing out and building on what they already know

**Overview:** tell them what we'll be looking at today

- refer to an agenda or on blackboard highlight goals and outcomes for the session
- be brief and succinct

**Presentation:** show and tell

- engage visual, auditory and kinesthetic aids as much as possible
- provide examples

**Exercise:** the learner performs the task

- pair mentees in small groups or one-on-one when possible so they can be active participants in their own knowledge creation
- provide feedback and echo their responses to acknowledge you're listening actively (when appropriate)

**Summarize:** briefly state what they just learned

- draw out major concepts or themes
- provide an opportunity to segue into a new topic or wrap up

### Participatory Techniques

#### 1. Drawing People Out

- a way of supporting people to take the next step in clarifying their ideas
- lets the speaker know you understand them and want to hear more

*Example: "what do you mean by..." "can you say more about that?"*

#### 2. Mirroring

- one way of paraphrasing the speakers words verbatim
- effective means of building trust in newly formed group

*Note: use the speakers words and repeat it to the group. If a speaker uses more than one sentence, draw out and repeat key words they used. It's important not to imitate the speaker, so use your own voice and gestures.*

#### 3. Balancing

- to avoid the first few speakers from setting the tone of direction of a conversation
- to draw out opinions from others who may feel silenced

*Example: "okay, now we know where three people stand; does anyone else have a different opinion?" "Are there other ways at looking at this?"*